

EXHIBIT 6



Internet Coverage

Worth Global Style Network

INTERNATIONAL FASHION PRESS BULLETIN

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THURSDAY 27 NOVEMBER 2003

WE LOVE IT: HELLO KITTY CELEBRATES 30TH ANNIVERSARY

The kitsch Japanese pop culture phenomenon that is Hello Kitty is celebrating its 30th anniversary in January 2004.

A globally recognised brand with more than 10,000 products, the bubblehead cartoon cat introduced in Japan in 1974 continues to be an icon of youth popular culture.

Created by Ikuko Shimizu, Hello Kitty is the most famous and collectible of Sanrio's stable of characters. She has been constantly reincarnated and manifested into more roles than her contemporaries, including Barbie, from branding on microwaves to macs and bandages to backpacks. However she still continues to be a character that has multi-generational appeal on a global scale.

"She's endlessly young. She's timeless," observed Bill Hensley, marketing director for Sanrio Inc. "That's probably why we're talking in terms of anniversary instead of a birthday." In the US, Sanrio's Hello Kitty products sell in more than 115 signature branded stores and thousands of speciality and department stores.

A selection of coveted brands has collaborated with the company in recent years including Paul Frank Industries and intimates designer Samantha Chang.

There is also a strong affiliation to the brand with celebrities, with singer Lisa Loeb naming her 2002 album 'Hello Lisa' after the brand and Cameron Diaz choosing to wear a cameo pendant from the collection to the Nickelodeon Kids' Choice Awards this year.

However in Japan, the birthplace of the iconic brand, Hello Kitty fever dominates the city, with branded cabs, cafes, food, hotels and even two theme parks, Puroland Tokyo and Harmony Island on the island of Kyushu. There was even a limited edition Hello Kitty facemask introduced during the Sars scare earlier this year.

The most recent designer to offer their collaborative design skills to the Hello Kitty icon is accessories designer Tarina Tarantino. It is the first time Kitty has been changed so dramatically, sporting pink tresses to resemble those of her designer. The debut collection featuring a range of jewellery, handbags, hair accessories and belts is currently available via retail stores or the internet, priced from \$15-120.

Full details of the imminent festivities for Hello Kitty's anniversary are being kept under wraps but considering the popularity of the brand, there will definitely be demand for celebration.

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World **W**ide **W**eb **CLIPS****SOURCE:** Women's Wear Daily (NY,NY)**DATE:** 10-30-2003**ACCOUNT:** A.244**HEADLINE:** Happy Birthday KittySource Website: <http://www.wwd.com/content/article.cfm?ID=%25%22%2DL%24Q%25%28%20%0A&xart=1&CFID=198910&CFTOKEN=24475444>

By Rose Apodaca Jones

LOS ANGELES -- Few youth icons grow old gracefully, let alone keep their cool.

There's Barbie, but at 40-something, even she appears more like mom or an older sister than a genuine trendsetter.

Then there's *Hello Kitty*, on the eve of her 30th anniversary, reveling in greater popularity and profits. With the patina of Japanese pop culture and strategic collaborations with edgy fashion designers, the snow-white, bubblehead cat introduced in Japan in 1974 by Tokyo-based Sanrio and two years later to the U.S., is now a \$1 billion global brand phenomenon that's been built with scarcely any advertising, claiming fans from the cradle to the office and beyond.

A red-carpet favorite without ever appearing on the silver screen, her A-list fans include Sarah Jessica Parker and Drew Barrymore. She's charmed retailers as disparate as Henri Bendel and Target into prime space for a generous sampling of the more than 10,000 products bearing her puss.

Hello Kitty is just one in Sanrio's stable of successful characters, but it's the most recognizable and collected figure. Created by Ikuko Shimizu, who no longer works for the company, *Hello Kitty* and her pals emerged in Japan as the people were embracing an American-influenced consumerism that included casual birthday gifts and collecting. Not since Barbie has a character manifested itself in more roles: From bandages to backpacks, microwaves to Macintoshes, no slice of life has been left unconsidered. See *Hello Kitty* surf, play guitar, don a bridal gown or step out in a hot pink flip 'do.

"She's endlessly young. She's timeless," observed Bill Hensley, marketing director for *Sanrio Inc.* "That's probably why we're talking in terms of anniversary instead of a birthday."

Yet, where that flaxen-haired plastic trophy female Barbie is relegated to toy sports cars and dream houses, Tokyo locals can hail life-sized *Hello Kitty* cabs, dine at *Hello Kitty* cafes serving Kitty-shaped food and sleep in *Hello Kitty* suites at the Daiwa Hotels. There are also *Hello Kitty* theme parks: Puroland Tokyo and Harmonyland on the island of Kyushu.

Cat fever is no less intense elsewhere. In the U.S., where Sanrio products sell in more than 115 signature shops in malls nationwide, and thousands of specialty and department stores, singer Lisa Loeb and the kitty appeared on her 2002 album, "Hello Lisa." Heidi Klum was caught looking into a *Hello Kitty* compact while curling her lashes backstage at the Victoria's Secret fashion show. The star treatment has been as much a case of genuine fanfare as *Hello Kitty*'s keepers ensuring her swag is ready to go at VIP

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suites like the one at the 2002 Golden Globes, where Debra Messing trotted off with no fewer than three *Hello Kitty* toasters.

"She's this iconic creature that for me wasn't limited to seven-year-old girls," said Richie Rich of New York-based Heatherette, among a handful of coveted brands that collaborated with *Hello Kitty* in recent seasons, including Paul Frank Industries, accessories designer Tarina Tarantino, T-shirt artist Doe and intimate maker Samantha Chang.

Heatherette is reprising its partnership with a second spring collection and expects to continue co-branding product for several more seasons, including custom offerings such as the dress sold at a charity auction last year for \$50,000.

"She's almost an extension of the Warholian idea of fame," Rich added, although going way past Warhol's "15 minutes."

It has been *Hello Kitty*'s realization as a kind of anti-fashion statement that has been driving her burgeoning appeal in the last decade. Although the core target remains girls ages five to 15, a generation brought up on Sanrio has been reluctant to leave Kitty and her crew behind simply because they're now old enough to introduce her to their daughters. Purchases for personal and gift reasons are equally split, and of all consumer buys, about a third are for those 18 and over, according to Hensley.

For the Kittyphile with digs of her own, there are TVs, barstools, coffee makers, vacuums, cell phones and car mats. There were even vibrators for a brief time, which became a coveted kitsch adult party gift, but those disappeared off domestic retail shelves when they were deemed inappropriate. In Asia, there were even protective face masks introduced during the SARS scare of early 2003.

The bulk of design for the brand continues to come out of the Tokyo headquarters. A second design team, wholly owned by the parent company, is based in San Francisco generates 4,000 stockkeeping units annually for the Western Hemisphere.

An additional operating and licensing office in Los Angeles oversees the design of an additional 4,000-plus sku's through some 80 licensees in North America. Asia has several hundred of its own.

"What's really fun is we're bringing out 200 to 300 new items at any time and they sell out," said Sanrio's Hensley. "The key is doing them in low quantities. That's a big part of the success."

Distribution is another key. In the U.S., Sanrio and its licensees ship to some 14,000 doors, from Mervyn's to specialty boutiques and departments. It owns and operates 35 Sanrio doors in the U.S, most averaging about 1,200 square feet, and licenses another 80 Sanrio stores. Another 200 Sanrio shops are scattered throughout Canada and South and Central America.

Among Sanrio's latest and largest -- at 2,000 square feet -- is the company-run flagship in Las Vegas Fashion Square, which opened this month and will eventually stock exclusive Vegas-themed *Hello Kitty* product, similar to its approach in its New York and Hawaii flagships.

Western Hemisphere retail revenues for *Hello Kitty* are \$500 million.

That's Godzilla-size business for a company founded in 1960 on the slogan "small gift, big smile" (odd,

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given Sanrio's feline superstar has no mouth). Founding chairman Shintaro Tsuji remains on the board of the publicly traded company. His son, Kunihiko Tsuji serves as president of *Sanrio Inc.* North America.

A pregnant Tarina Tarantino was in the midst of appointing the nursery with her own vintage *Hello Kitty* collectibles when the call came from Sanrio in 2001 asking if she would collaborate.

"I was completely excited because I've always been a *Hello Kitty* freak," Tarantino said. "I've been buying the stuff since 1976, when I was six. I still check Ebay for stuff. But there's every kind of Hello Kitty jewelry imaginable. It was a challenge coming up with something that they haven't already made."

The designer, known for her Swarovski-speckled jewelry and quirky accessories, proposed an altered version of the icon sporting a hot pink flip 'do inspired by Tarantino's own signature pink tresses.

"The idea was, 'What if *Hello Kitty* is as obsessed with me the way I am with her?'" she said.

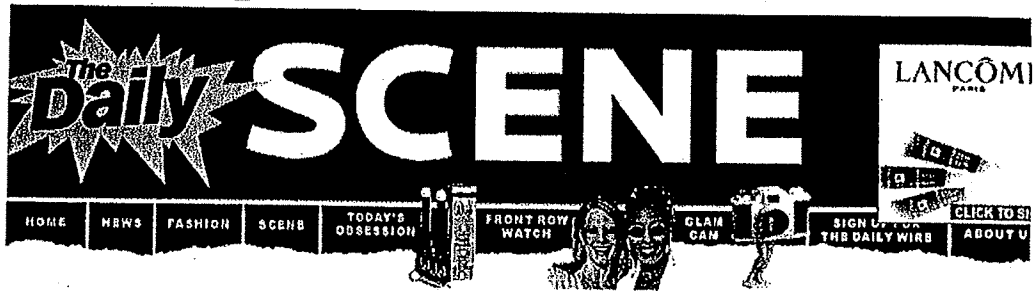
Initially, the powers at Sanrio balked at the idea. Though *Hello Kitty* has undergone slight transformations over three decades, this went further. With designers in Sanrio's U.S. office campaigning for approval of Tarantino's idea, the *Hello Kitty* Pink Head Collection by Tarina Tarantino was given the green light in 2002. The debut collection of 50 items, including jewelry, handbags, hair accessories and belts, wholesaling from \$15 to \$120, launched at market this summer.

Cameron Diaz wore a cameo pendant from the collection to the Kid's Choice Awards and Nikki Hilton picked up a necklace for the Video Music Awards at Ice Accessories here.

"The Hilton sisters are like rock stars in Japan, so the heads at Sanrio are really excited about that scoop," remarked Tarantino, who was extended an open-ended contract with a one-year renewable clause for Pink Head.

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Highlights: *Hello Kitty*, *Sanrio Inc.*, *Hello Kitty*



Friday, June 11, 2004

SEARCH

D.S.I. (Daily Scene Investigation): Hello Kitty Turns 30

My oh my, Kitty's got so many celebrity friends!

NEW YORK: Wednesday, June 09, 2004

WHAT: Hello Kitty Celebrates 30 years of Cute with Unicef

WHERE: Rockefeller Center

SCENE: The wintertime skating rink of Rock Center was transformed into a little pink summertime paradise in honor of Hello Kitty's 30th anniversary. Many guests—dressed in their best Hello Kitty-wear (our favorite was a white Kitty beret)—sipped strawberry daiquiris and pink champagne while they nibbled on lobster and shrimp. **Lisa Loeb**, a longtime Hello Kitty fan who even named an album "Hello Lisa" for the cartoon idol, introduced the UK group Mis-teeq who



performed "Scandalous." And as her Orlando Magic husband **Grant Hill** watched on, **Tamia** belted out "Stranger in My House" to the Midtown crowd.

SEEN:

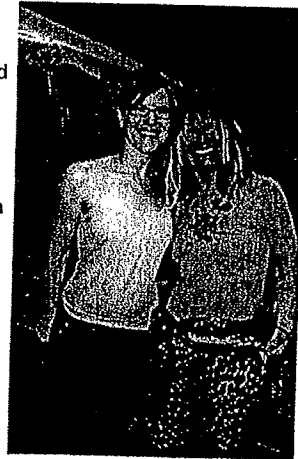
Nanette Lepore asking **Kathy Hilton** if her purple and gold cocktail coat was one of Lepore's own designs. Not knowing, Hilton took off the jacket to check and, sure enough, it was!

Kathy Hilton and husband **Rick**, excitedly chatted about their upcoming reality show "The Good Life," which is two weeks away from final casting.

Nicky Hilton wore her very own tribute to Kitty: a baby blue western-cut dress with Hello Kitty patches made by the Heatherette boys especially for the event. "[Richie Rich and Traver Raines] literally had to sew her in it," her dad, **Rick**, told *The Daily*. "I was given a shirt but I decided not to wear it." Papa Hilton went with the safer blue blazer and dress shirt combo instead.

Nicky accessorized her dress with a white leather purse with silver stars from her latest bag collection launching this July at Bloomingdale's. But even **Nicky** couldn't avoid the Hilton-loving camera crews—she was being tailed by one shooting "Sagas," a two-hour "20/20" meets A&E "Biography" special about the heiress airing in Europe. After saying hello to her parents (and Kitty of course), Hilton and her handbag partner **Brian Long** sped off to Spice Market for dinner.

Betsey Johnson was excitedly talking about her two new properties in Zihuatanejo, Mexico. "That's the place they escape to at the end of Shawshank Redemption," she informed us. One of her new properties is a small hotel the colorful designer is renovating to open next year, and the other is a private home of her own. "It's silly for one person to have four homes [Manhattan, Hamptons, and two in Mexico] but my friend practically gave me the second one and it's right on the beach!"



Lisa Loeb and Betsey Johnson

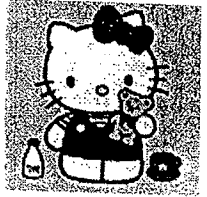
Fabian Basabe checking out Mis-teeq before meeting friends for Chinese food at Chin Chin.

ANS Exclusive Interview: Hello Kitty 30th Anniversary

Page 1 of 2

ANS Exclusive Interview: Hello Kitty 30th Anniversary

By: Jonah Morgan



The Year is 1974, the current anime and manga fueled Japanese character industry in America is 20 years away. A company in Japan named Sanrio begins marketing items with the character graphic of a cute white cat. In 1976, Hello Kitty appears in the USA..... licensing you ask?? what's that? Sanrio brings Hello Kitty here..... **entirely on it's own.** Today, we're taking it back to the old school, 30 years ago, when Sanrio in Japan (www.sanrio.com) first introduced the Hello Kitty character into it's product merchandising line. The move marked the birth of a global character icon 30 years later which is synonymous with cute and cudley.

Sanrio itself was started in Japan in 1960 when President and CEO Shintaro Tsuji founded the company. Traditional Japanese greetings call for the common exchange of small gifts and the firm's first products were stationary, little purses and other inexpensive items designed for exchange. In '76 when the first Sanrio stores appeared in the U.S. city of San Jose a store devoted entirely to one line of character based prodcts was unheard of. Today, there are over 300 Sanrio boutiques in the western hemisphere, with 120 in malls across the USA. In addition, Sanrio products are available in department stores and retail outlets such as Target.

From the perspective of being introduced to Japanese characters via games and animation, what Sanrio has been able to do with Hello Kitty has always been a curiositiy for me. There's definetly some relation there..... but it's hard to qualify. Hello Kitty is almost in a league all it's own. If you think of manga type characters as cars on a road, every so often one passes another in popularity, switching lanes and merging back into the traffic lane. To fit Hello Kitty into the analogy, it wouldn't even be on that road, it would be a bullet train on a track next to the road doing about 200 mph. Part of the curiositiy lies within how Hello Kitty is marketed. Unlike anime, manga or video game characters that spin off from media into product lines, Sanrio's characters begin their own existence as retail products. Becuase they are not tied to a definitive story line the customers can - and do - project their own feelings and emotions onto the characters.

To help explore the fascination with Hello Kitty over 30 years we recently spoke to Sanrio's marketing director Bill Hensley:

1. This year marks the 30th anniversary of the Hello Kitty brand for Sanrio, could you tell us Sanrio's brief thoughts on this milestone?

Hello Kitty's 30th Anniversary offers us an opportunity to look back at 30 years of great Hello Kitty design that has led to her pop icon status. More importantly, to look forward to more great design in the future.

2. Across Sanrio's Global Holdings how vital has the American market been to the Hello Kitty brand and ultimately Sanrio's success?

The American market still represents a minority share of Sanrio's global revenues, but it represents the fastest growing Sanrio market.

3. Can you give us an estimate of how many unique product offerings related to Hello Kitty have been marketed in the USA since the 1976 debut?

Just an educated guess - In Hello Kitty's history, somewhere between 50,000 and 100,000 unique products have been marketed in the US.

4. The Japanese character industry has been increasing in it's popularity in the American market in recent years. This has come about in the form of Anime, Video Games and manga all being localized for the market and the underground movement of fans who directly import character goods into the country. It's kind of funny, I've always seen Hello Kitty and Sanrio as existing outside of this sphere of influence that is commonly associated to Anime's boom here which began growing in the 1990's. Has Sanrio watched this phenomena and how has it affected your company's approach to marketing Hello Kitty given it's Japanese roots?

Sanrio is a character brand developer and designer. We're happy that many fans of Anime are also fans of Hello Kitty or other Sanrio characters, but the Anime phenomenon has not affected the way we develop and

market the Hello Kitty brand.

6. You have many special events planned over the coming months for the 30th anniversary of Hello Kitty, can you tell us if any special Japanese guests associated with the creation of the brand will be attending or coming to the USA?
We were pleased to have Ms. Yuko Yamaguchi, Sanrio's chief designer for the Hello Kitty brand, join us at our official Anniversary Kick-Off event this past June at Rockefeller Center in New York.

7. Besides Hello Kitty, how are Sanrio's other character brands performing in the USA market?
Hello Kitty is obviously the star, but other characters in the Sanrio family are showing their strength. Most notable is Chococat, who is red-hot in our boutique stores.

8. What's coming up on the horizon for the next 6 months to 1 year for Sanrio?
At least 100 to 300 new items each month, plus new characters as well.

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Magazine Coverage

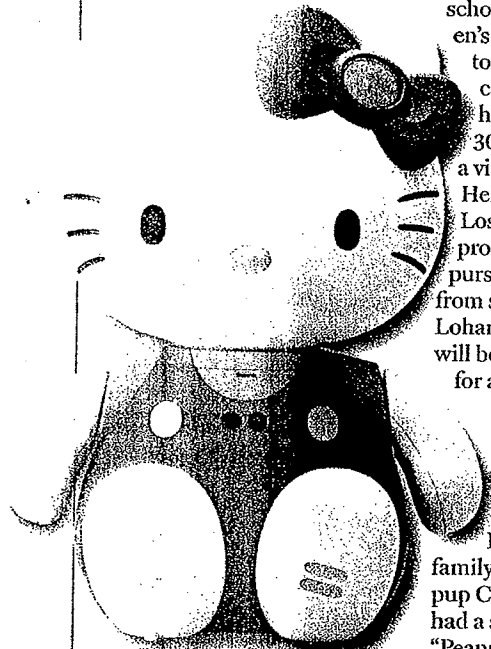
Newsweek

Periscope

HELLO KITTY

The Craze Continues

LOOKING FOR WHAT she calls a "slumber party" purse at the Sanrio store in New York's Times Square, Lisa Mejia, 29,



proclaims, "I like Hello Kitty!" Maybe it's because they're the same age? In November, Sanrio's Kitty turns 30, but the

world is already celebrating. In Japan—Kitty's home—collectors are keeping an eye out for special gold Kitty coins as well as the \$3,700—yes, \$3,700—Hello Kitty robot (left), with 20,000 conversation patterns. A global Kitty exhibit includes a photo of a crop circle in England shaped like the feline. In America, where Kitty pencil cases have long been a staple among schoolgirls, an October women's surfing event in Huntington Beach, Calif., will showcase her new board. Stores have already rolled out 30th-anniversary booty like a vintage coin purse, the first Hello Kitty product. And in Los Angeles, a Hello Kitty prom dress, a Judith Leiber purse and sketches of Kitty from stars such as Lindsay Lohan and Calista Flockhart will be auctioned. (How much for an Ally cat?)

Bill Hensley, Sanrio's marketing director, attributes Kitty's enduring appeal to the fact that she's "so incredibly cute."

But Kitty and her growing family (including Chococat and pup Chibimaru) have never had a story line like, say, the "Peanuts" gang—which may actually help. "Fans can project their own," says Hensley. Hey, a little mystery never hurts.

—RAMIN SETOODEH

InStyle

NOVEMBER 2004

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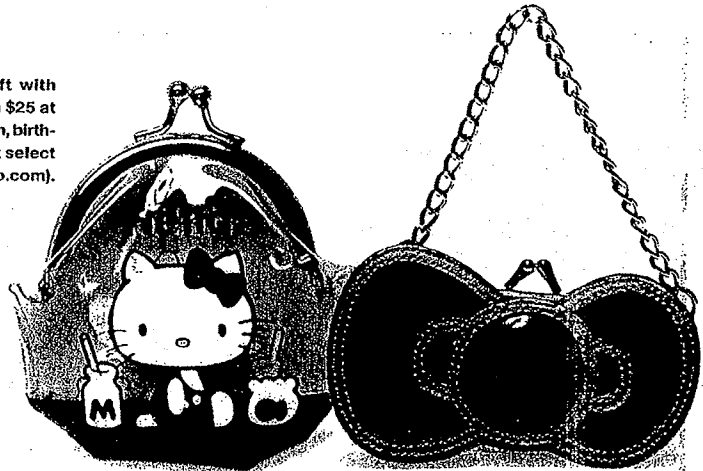
WHAT'S HOT NOW

Nine Lives (+21)

Hollywood's favorite feline turns 30

She's come a long way, baby: In the beginning, Hello Kitty adorned coin purses and stationery. Today this lovable kitten (or should we say cat?) is emblazoned on everything from bikes to sandwich presses to crystal purses to high-end jewelry. Feeling frisky? There's even Hello Kitty boy-shorts underwear. Meow! —Alice H. Kim

Retro coin purse (a gift with purchases of more than \$25 at Sanrio) and limited-edition, birthday, red bow bag (\$13; at select Sanrio stores and sanrio.com).



1974

2004



CAMERON DIAZ loves this Hello Kitty portrait necklace from Tarina Tarantino (\$188; tarinatarantino.com).



BEYONCÉ totes this Hello Kitty beaded mini-purse with chain handle (\$15; sanrio.com).



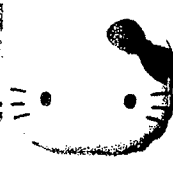
GWEN STEFANI owns a Heatherette Couture limited-edition Hello Kitty clutch (\$65; heatherette.com).



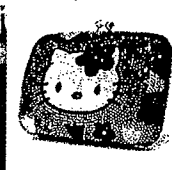
SARAH JESSICA PARKER is a fan of Hello Kitty tops; the line includes this sequined sweatshirt (\$28; sanrio.com).



LUCY LIU has a sandwich maker that imprints Hello Kitty's face on toasted bread (\$44; sanrio.com).



SCARLETT JOHANSSON can have sweet dreams thanks to her Hello Kitty pillow (\$21; sanrio.com).



PARIS HILTON purrs over the Judith Leiber Hello Kitty minaudière she got at the VMAs (\$1,895; 866-542-7167).



MADONNA uses Hello Kitty lip gloss, which comes with a roller stamp and key chain (\$3; sanrio.com).



MARIAH CAREY sings along with a Hello Kitty radio, CD and cassette player (\$60; 800-591-3869 for stores).



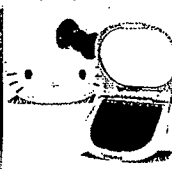
JESSICA ALBA dials out on her Hello Kitty Angel light-up phone with caller ID (\$30; 800-591-3869 for stores).



ASHLEY JUDD bid on (and won) a Nirve bike like this Surfer Kitty cruiser at a charity auction (\$320; nirve.com).



BRANDY packs with feline prowess; she owns a Hello Kitty rolling backpack in Wine Red (\$42; sanrio.com).



HEIDI KLUM has a Hello Kitty mirror-and-comb set to help her with that supermodel hair (\$4; sanrio.com).

KITTY CORNER

Hello Kitty has a twin sister, Mimmy (who knew?). More famous are her pals, below, with their respective "birth" dates and star fans:



CHOCO CAT (1996)
Kirsten Dunst



LITTLE TWIN STARS (1975)
Drew Barrymore



CINNAMOROLL (2002)
Hilary Duff



Still life: Devon Jarvis (except bicycle, radio and 1974 coin purse: Sanrio)

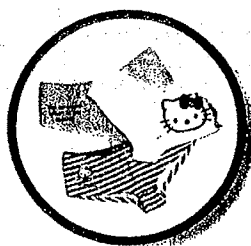
—additional reporting by Alysia Poe

THE

SP NOVEMBER 2004

Take Note:

HAVE YOU HEARD ABOUT ...



What's New, Pussycat?

Hello Kitty celebrates 30 years of meow by unleashing new ultra-hip accessory and apparel collections. With a fan base that includes Cameron Diaz, Sarah Jessica Parker, and Drew Barrymore, don't be surprised to see the fashionable feline on the red carpet.

Above: Hello Kitty panties; Jacques Torres for Origins chocolate bars; the Nespresso C190.

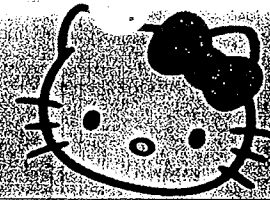


Newspaper Coverage

THE ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER

Oct. 14, 2004

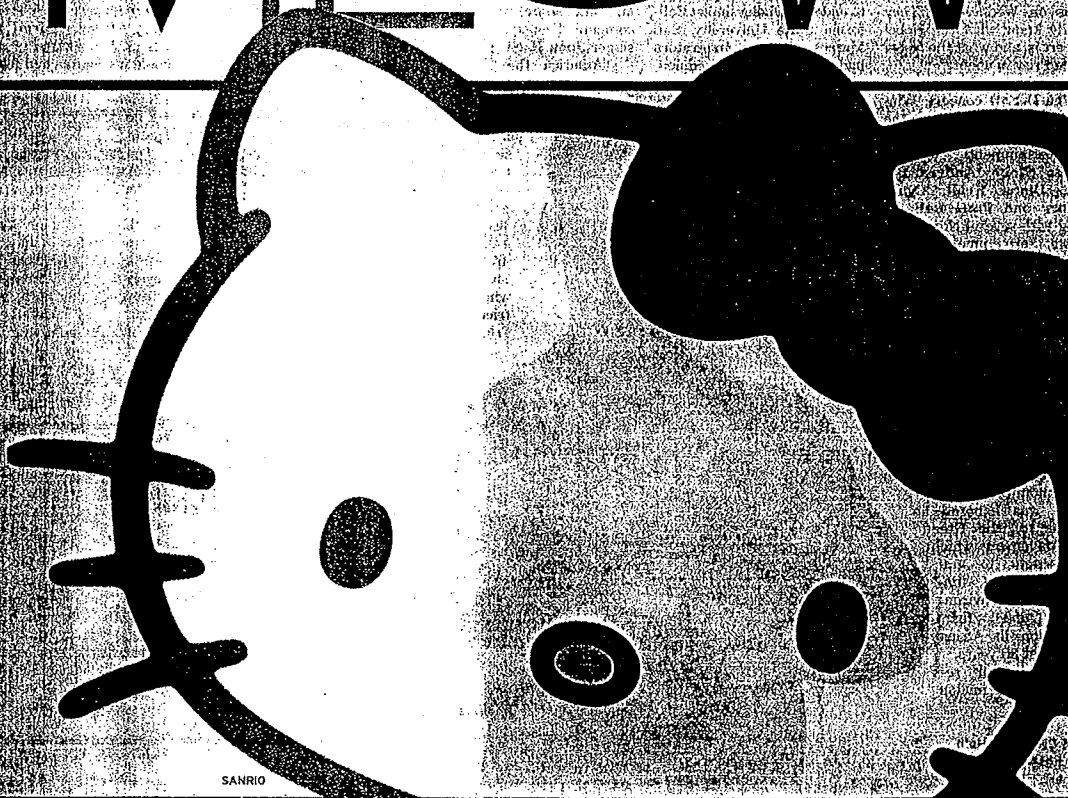
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HELLO
KITTY
TURNS
30
LIFE, ETC.

MEOW

Celebrating
30 years of
Hello Kitty



SANRIO

Whoever said you can't be everything to everyone clearly never said it to Hello Kitty.

As the cute little kitty with the bow on her ear turns 30 - 30! - she is everywhere, all the time, in every style or setting imaginable.

Hello Kitty is a pencil, a computer, a toaster. She is a taxicab in Japan, and a theme park there, too. She is a kids Happy Meal toy and an adult battery-operated massager.

She is at once mass market and underground, a girl and a grown woman.

If she has no mouth, it's all the better to make her what you want her to be, and make

her that much more a world icon.

"She doesn't have a mouth, so I think that when you're a child, and you're drawn to the character, she is feeling the same emotions that you're feeling, so she becomes your friend," said Marie

By **PETER
LARSEN**
The Orange
County Register



HERE, KITTY: Amy Dalphy, a 45-year-old Irvine marketing director, loves Hello Kitty so much she has the cat everywhere in her office - and car.

MORE INSIDE

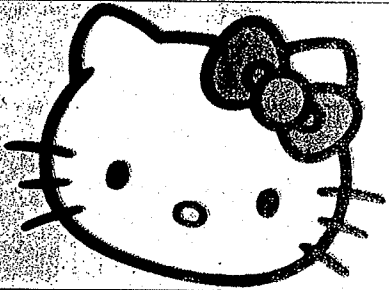
Hello Kitty is hosting a boardfest this weekend in Huntington Beach.

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THE ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER

Oct. 14, 2004

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HELLO KITTY TURNS 30 LIFE, ETC.

TIMELINE: LIFE AND TIMES OF HELLO KITTY

Hello Kitty is very Japanese. But her Japanese creators from Sanrio Co. wanted to give her a British background. Thus, Kitty was born in a London suburb 30 years ago to the White family. Her parents, an architect and a housewife, welcomed not just Hello on that first day of November, but also her twin sister, Mimmy.

MIMMY:
Hello
Kitty's
sister.

And, as they
say, the rest is
history.

Nov. 1,

1974: The white cartoon cat debuts. Created by Sanrio designer Shimizu Yuko, this new creature was named Kitty and came to be known as Hello Kitty.

1981: Hello Kitty merchandise expands into telephones, cameras and electronic products. The first Hello Kitty movie was made, called "Kitty and Mimmy's New Umbrella."

1983: UNICEF creates the exclusive title of "UNICEF Special Friend of Children" for Hello Kitty.

1987: CBS broadcasts the first Hello Kitty TV cartoon: "Hello Kitty's Furry Tale Theater."

1990: Sanrio Puroland amusement park opens in Tama City, Japan.

SEE TIMELINE • PAGE 10

FROM PAGE 1

1992: Hello Kitty's hair bow shows up in pink.

1995: The bow becomes a flower.

1999: Sanrio launches the Hello Kitty baby series in response to young mothers who have been loyal fans.

2000: Hello Kitty cafe opens in Honolulu. Shuts down a few years later after lease runs out.

2001: Sanrio designers bring Hello Kitty into the new century, introducing goth Kitty, punk Kitty and hip-hop Kitty.

2002: Singer Lisa Loeb, a huge Hello Kitty fan, plasters the icon on her new CD, titled "Hello Lisa."

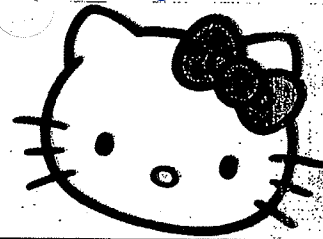
2004: Hello Kitty launches debut card in the United States.

**- TAMARA CHUANG/
The Orange County Register**



THE ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER

Oct. 14, 2007



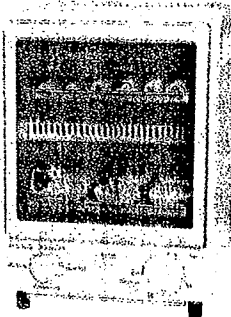
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THE BUSINESS OF BEING HELLO KITTY

**HOT
STUFF:** A
Hello Kitty
toaster
oven, from
Sanyo.

SANYO,
AP



From its juvenile niche, the cat has expanded to a 'lifestyle brand' worth \$4.2 billion a year.

By **TAMARA CHUANG**
THE ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER

Tease if you must, but girls with allowances have morphed into women with salaries – and fond memories of the cute white kitty.

Hello Kitty merchandise sales hit a half-billion dollars in the United States last year, and that's not from 95-cent Hello

Kitty erasers. Sales are growing about 20 percent a year, due largely to Sanrio Co.'s move in the mid-1990s to license the heck out of its cartoon fat cat.

Once limited to Sanrio stores and tiny kiosks at major department stores, Hello Kitty products are showing up at Target, Hot Topic, Amazon.com, even

SEE BUSINESS • PAGE 2

BUSINESS: Kitty is a fat cat

FROM PAGE 1

Mervyns. Today, Sanrio works with 120 U.S. licensees who make Hello Kitty products ranging from televisions to

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beach cruisers, steering-wheel covers to credit cards. In any month, there are some 400 new Sanrio products launched.

"Hello Kitty is a lifestyle brand, and we needed to get products into those places," said Bill Hensley, Sanrio's marketing director. "We're best at stationery and school supplies – the core essence of what you may remember from several years ago. But to become a lifestyle brand, we needed to work with others who have the expertise (in their product niche)."

Sanrio picked Nirve Sports Ltd. of Fountain Valley to handle the pink bicycles. Toy-maker Bandai America in Cypress holds the plastic toy-figurine license. Hello Kitty has even teamed up for projects with Orange County artists Shag and Paul Frank.

The Sanrio marketing machine has managed to spend zilch on advertising, preferring product placement and catering to celebrities. Cameron Diaz sporting a Hello Kitty necklace to the 2003 Teen Choice Awards? That was no

coincidence.

Such maverick marketing attracted Amy Dalphy to this feline phenomenon about 10 years ago. But it was becoming a stepmom and discovering Hello Kitty's girlie appeal that made a fan of Dalphy, a 45-year-old marketing director at Toshiba America in Irvine.

"It's an amazing example of branding. Hello Kitty is one of the best-known images in the world, like Coca Cola or Proctor & Gamble," said Dalphy, whose office reflects her affection for Hello Kitty.

Besides the usual stationery items, Dalphy has a Hello Kitty minifridge, computer mouse and mouse pad, desk clock, wall clock, calendar, glasses case, notebook case and a Hello Kitty outlined in rhinestones on her digital organizer.

"If you were in my office, you'd be overwhelmed, and you'd have a lot of fun stuff to play with," Dalphy said. "She's just so cheerful."

Globally, the Hello Kitty franchise is a \$4.2 billion industry, accounting for half of Sanrio's annual revenue.

The Washington Post

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 31, 2004

REAL DEALS



< Bow Regard

Clearly, Hello Kitty hasn't cashed in all her lives yet. She's celebrating her 30th birthday with limited-edition goodies inspired by her trademark red bow: a coin purse, mechanical pencil, spiral notebook, tote bag and the chain-strapped, Chanel-inspired bag seen here. \$6 to \$22 at Sanrio (Potomac Mills Mall, Prince William, 703-499-9287; Arundel Mills Mall, Hanover, 410-799-2001) or www.sanrio.com.

The Dallas Morning News

Texas' Leading Newspaper

Dallas, Texas, Thursday, October 14, 2004

DallasNews.com

TOUT

Let her eat cake

It's a big birthday for world's coolest Kitty

This is one cat who doesn't show her age. Though it's hard to believe, Hello Kitty, that adorable big-headed feline, is celebrating her 30th birthday. The company that created her, Sanrio, has launched a variety of events to mark the occasion.

Target is sponsoring an online auction of one-of-a-kind Hello Kitty items and celebrity artworks to benefit two children's charities: the U.S. fund for UNICEF and Target House, a home-away-from-home for families with children undergoing treatment at St. Jude Children's Research Hospital. The auction, which runs through Nov. 10,

includes an 18-karat white gold and diamond Hello Kitty charm bracelet by Kimora Lee Simmons, with bidding starting at \$1,800; a Betsey Johnson ruffled dress at \$250; and a Eugenia Kim Hello Kitty felt beret at \$125.

The Mossimo/Ernie Ball Hello Kitty electric guitar starting at \$305 would be perfect for an Avril Lavigne wannabe. The most expensive item, a fully equipped 25-foot Hello Kitty Airstream

trailer, starts at \$40,000. To view and bid on items, go to Target.com, type in "Hello Kitty auction," then click on the second match, "Hello Kitty." Join the bidding now will take you to the Yahoo auction site.

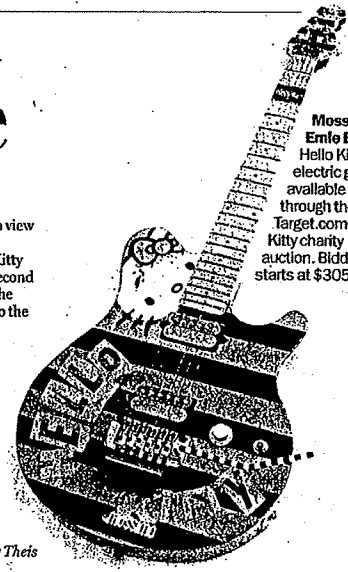
Sanrio is also marking Hello Kitty's birthday with an art exhibit in Tokyo that features designer Jeremy Scott's *Kitty de Milo*, as well as Malcolm McLaren's *Hello Kitty Totem Pole*. A gala birthday party in Los Angeles on Nov. 10 wraps up the festivities and auction.

Tammy Theis

Betsey Johnson
Hello Kitty ruffled
corset dress,
available through
the Target.com
Hello Kitty charity
auction. Bidding
starts at \$250.



Mossimo/
Ernie Ball
Hello Kitty
electric guitar,
available
through the
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Kitty charity
auction. Bidding
starts at \$305.





Trade Coverage



• ANNIVERSARY ITEMS

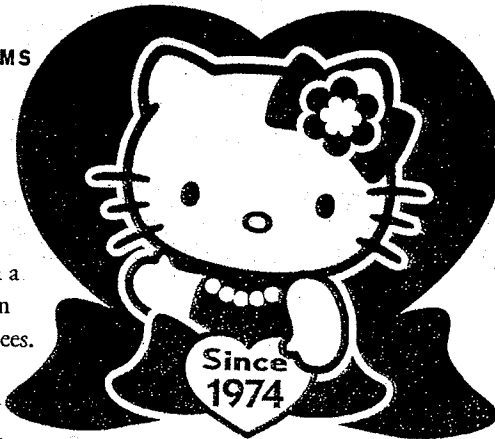
Hello Kitty Turns 30

Hello Kitty hasn't had time for catnaps over the last 30 years, growing from a character on a coin purse to a pop icon with hundreds of licensees.

A six-month program to commemorate the property's 30th anniversary kicked off last month with numerous outreach initiatives.

"Our goal is to increase visibility in a very positive way," says Bruce Giuliano, senior vice president of licensing at Sanrio. "We want Sanrio and Hello Kitty fans to be aware of the brand as an integral part of the American lifestyle, which is part of the reason we put the 30th anniversary together the way that we did." Philanthropy plays a major role with Sanrio named UNICEF's Global Special Friend of Children and an alliance with Target to benefit Target House. Sanrio also established its first-ever sponsorship this summer with the "Hello Kitty Boardfest Featuring Holly Beck."

In 2005, the company will expand its retail channels particularly in the upstairs market, as well as extend its co-branded partnerships, confides Giuliano.



WWD THURSDAY

10 WWD, THURSDAY, OCTOBER 30, 2003

happy birthday kitty

Thirty years later, Hello Kitty still purrs in popularity and profits.

By Rose Apodaca Jones

LOS ANGELES — Few youth icons grow old gracefully, let alone keep their cool.

There's Barbie, but at 40-something, even she appears more like mom or an older sister than a genuine trendsetter. Then there's Hello Kitty, on the eve of her 30th anniversary, reveling in greater popularity and profits. With the patina of Japanese pop culture and strategic collaborations with edgy fashion designers, the snow-white, bubblehead cat introduced in Japan in 1974 by Tokyo-based Sanrio and two years later to the U.S., is now a \$1 billion global brand phenomenon that's been built with scarcely any advertising, claiming fans from the cradle to the office and beyond.

A red-carpet favorite without ever appearing on the silver screen, her A-list fans include Sarah Jessica Parker and Drew Barrymore. She's charmed retailers as disparate as Henri Bendel and Target into prime space for a generous sampling of the more than 10,000 products bearing her puss.

Hello Kitty is just one in Sanrio's stable of successful characters, but it's the most recognizable and collected figure. Created by Ikuko Shimizu, who no longer works for the company, Hello Kitty and her pals emerged in Japan as the people were embracing an American-influenced consumerism that included casual birthday gifts and collecting. Not since Barbie has a character manifested itself in more roles: From bandages to backpacks, microwaves to Macintoshes, no slice of life has been left unconsidered. See Hello Kitty surf, play guitar, don a bridal gown or step out in a hot pink flip 'do.

"She's endlessly young. She's timeless," observed Bill Hensley, marketing director for Sanrio Inc. "That's probably why we're talking in terms of anniversary instead of a birthday."

Yet, where that flaxen-haired plastic trophy female Barbie is relegated to toy sports cars and dream houses, Tokyo locals can hail life-sized Hello Kitty cabs, dine at Hello Kitty cafes serving Kitty-shaped food and sleep in Hello Kitty suites at the Daiwa Hotels. There are also Hello Kitty theme parks: Puroland Tokyo and Harmonyland on the island of Kyushu.

Cat fever is no less intense elsewhere. In the U.S., where Sanrio products sell in more than 115 signature shops in malls nationwide, and thousands of specialty and department stores, singer Lisa Loeb and the Kitty appeared on her 2002 album, "Hello Lisa." Heidi Klum was caught looking into a Hello Kitty compact while curling her lashes backstage at the Victoria's Secret fashion show. The star treatment has been as much a case of genuine fanfare as Hello Kitty's keepers ensuring her swag is ready to go at VIP suites like the one at the 2002 Golden Globes, where Debra Messing trotted off with no fewer than three Hello Kitty toasters.

"She's this iconic creature that for me wasn't limited to seven-year-old girls," said Richie Rich of New York-based Heatherette, among a handful of coveted brands that collaborated with Hello Kitty in recent seasons, including Paul Frank Industries, accessories designer Tarina Tarantino, T-shirt artist Doe and intimate maker Samantha Chang.

Heatherette is reprising its partnership with a second spring collection and expects to continue co-branding product for several more seasons, including custom offerings such as the dress sold at a charity auction last year for \$50,000.

"She's almost an extension of the Warholian idea of fame," Rich added, although going way past Warhol's "15 minutes."

It has been Hello Kitty's realization as a kind of anti-fashion statement that has been driving her burgeoning appeal in the last decade. Although the core target remains girls ages five to 15, a generation brought up on Sanrio has been reluctant to leave Kitty and her crew behind simply because they're now old enough to

Tarina Tarantino



introduce her to their daughters. Purchases for personal and gift reasons are equally split, and of all consumer buys, about a third are for those 18 and over, according to Hensley.

For the Kittyphile with digs of her own, there are TVs, bar stools, coffee makers, vacuums, cell phones and car mats. There were even vibrators for a brief time, which became a coveted kitsch adult party gift, but those disappeared off domestic retail shelves when they were deemed inappropriate. In Asia, there were even protective face masks introduced during the SARS scare of early 2003.

The bulk of design for the brand continues to come out of the Tokyo headquarters. A second design team, wholly owned by the parent company, is based in San Francisco generates 4,000 stock-keeping units annually for the Western Hemisphere.

An additional operating and licensing office in Los Angeles oversees the design of an additional 4,000-plus sku's through some 80 licensees in North America. Asia has several hundred of its own.

"What's really fun is we're bringing out 200 to 300 new items at any time and they sell out," said Sanrio's Hensley. "The key is doing them in low quantities. That's a big part of the success."

Distribution is another key. In the U.S., Sanrio and its licensees ship to some 14,000 doors, from Mervyn's to specialty boutiques and departments. It owns and operates 35 Sanrio doors in the U.S., most averaging about 1,200 square feet, and licenses another 80 Sanrio stores. Another 200 Sanrio shops are scattered throughout Canada and South and Central America.

Among Sanrio's latest and largest — at 2,000 square feet — is the company-run flagship in Las Vegas Fashion Square, which opened this month and will eventually stock exclusive Vegas-themed Hello Kitty product, similar to its approach in its New York and Hawaii flagships.

Western Hemisphere retail revenues for Hello Kitty are \$500 million.

That's Godzilla-size business for a company founded in 1960 on the slogan "small gift, big smile" (odd, given Sanrio's feline

superstar has no mouth). Founding chairman Shintaro Tsuji remains on the board of the publicly traded company. His son, Kunihiko Tsuji serves as president of Sanrio Inc. North America.

A pregnant Tarina Tarantino was in the midst of appointing the nursery with her own vintage Hello Kitty collectibles when the call came from Sanrio in 2001 asking if she would collaborate.

"I was completely excited because I've always been a Hello Kitty freak," Tarantino said. "I've been buying the stuff since 1976, when I was six. I still check Ebay for stuff. But there's every kind of Hello Kitty jewelry imaginable. It was a challenge coming up with something that they haven't already made."

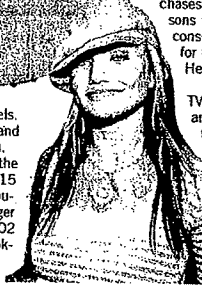
The designer, known for her Swarovski-speckled jewelry and quirky accessories, proposed an altered version of the icon sporting a hot pink flip 'do inspired by Tarantino's own signature pink tresses.

"The idea was, 'What if Hello Kitty is as obsessed with me the way I am with her?'" she said.

Initially, the powers at Sanrio balked at the idea. Though Hello Kitty has undergone slight transformations over three decades, this went further. With designers in Sanrio's U.S. office campaigning for approval of Tarantino's idea, the Hello Kitty Pink Head Collection by Tarina Tarantino was given the green light in 2002. The debut collection of 50 items, including jewelry, handbags, hair accessories and belts, wholesaling from \$15 to \$120, launched at market this summer.

Cameron Diaz wore a cameo pendant from the collection to the Kid's Choice Awards and Nikki Hilton picked up a necklace for the Video Music Awards at Ice Accessories here.

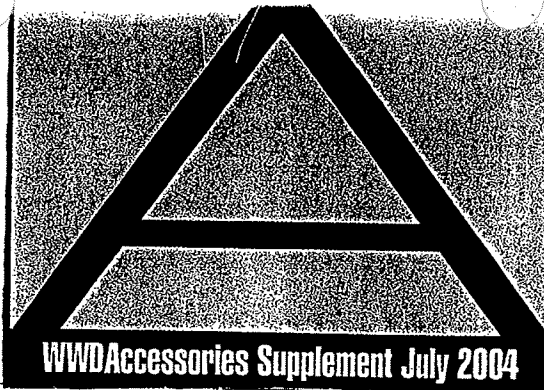
"The Hilton sisters are like rock stars in Japan, so the heads at Sanrio are really excited about that scoop," remarked Tarantino, who was extended an open-ended contract with a one-year renewable clause for Pink Head.



Cameron Diaz wears a necklace from the Pink Head line.



Clockwise from far left: Hello Kitty products include travel cases, coffeemakers, handbags, bicycles and apparel.



THE CAT'S MEOW

Hello Kitty may be turning a mature 30 this year, but that's no reason for the feline icon to shed her girlie-girl pink ensembles. However, she may update her accessories, now that designers from Steve Madden to Eugenia Kim, Tarina Tarantino, Judith Leiber and Kimora Lee Simmons have set to work creating limited-edition must-haves for the Sanrio poster girl.

Only 20 to 80 of each item will be produced and dispersed exclusively at the 120 Sanrio boutiques nationwide. And for the ultimate Hello Kitty collector, the most coveted items will be part of a charity silent auction for UNICEF and Target House that begins Sept. 15 and ends on Nov. 10.

Kimora Lee Simmons' Hello Kitty charm bracelet, made of white gold and diamonds, is expected to draw the largest donation. "Sanrio asked me for something over the top, which makes me think luxury," said Simmons. "It is for such a great cause, and Hello Kitty has such a cute charm. I loved giving her my special touch."

Tarina Tarantino, who through her co-brand with Sanrio designs hair accessories, jewelry and handbags sporting her signature Hello Kitty "Pink Head," will be contributing a couture necklace to the auction, as well as designing commemorative pieces for her own fall collection. "To have my own Hello Kitty character is a

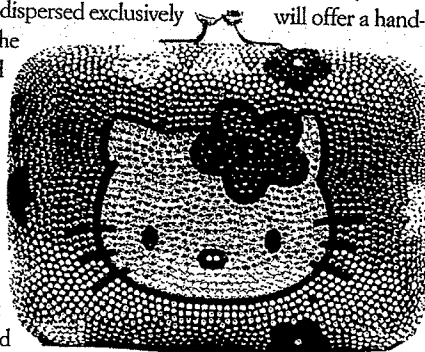
dream come true," said Tarantino, "and to be a part of this celebration is an honor."

Sanrio will also partner up with Judith Leiber, known for her jeweled bags and accessories, in a co-brand effort. Frank Zambrelli, creative director at Judith Leiber, predicted a strong synergy would be created through this partnership. "Judith Leiber and Hello Kitty both have very dedicated collectors, and giving the whimsy of Hello Kitty a couture touch is very Judith Leiber." The collection will offer a hand-beaded minaudière as well as a compact mirror. These items will be available at the Judith Leiber flagship store opening Oct. 14, but can be special ordered as early as September.

In addition to the celebrity-designed accessories, Sanrio will be rolling out some new Hello Kitty items of their own as part of the birthday bash. In July, a line of suede accessories will become available to shoppers. There will also be a new line of rhinestone-encrusted accessories called Hello Kitty "Sparkle" that will arrive in September. Both lines will range in price from \$15 to \$60 and will be available wherever Sanrio is sold.

This means Hello Kitty won't be the only cat in town with cause for joy. Sanrio expects the 30th anniversary commemoration to ring in about \$500 million in retail sales. "It is going to be a lot of fun," gushed Bill Hinsley, marketing director at Sanrio. "I am looking forward to 30 more!"

— Elizabeth Borenstein



Judith Leiber's Hello Kitty bag.

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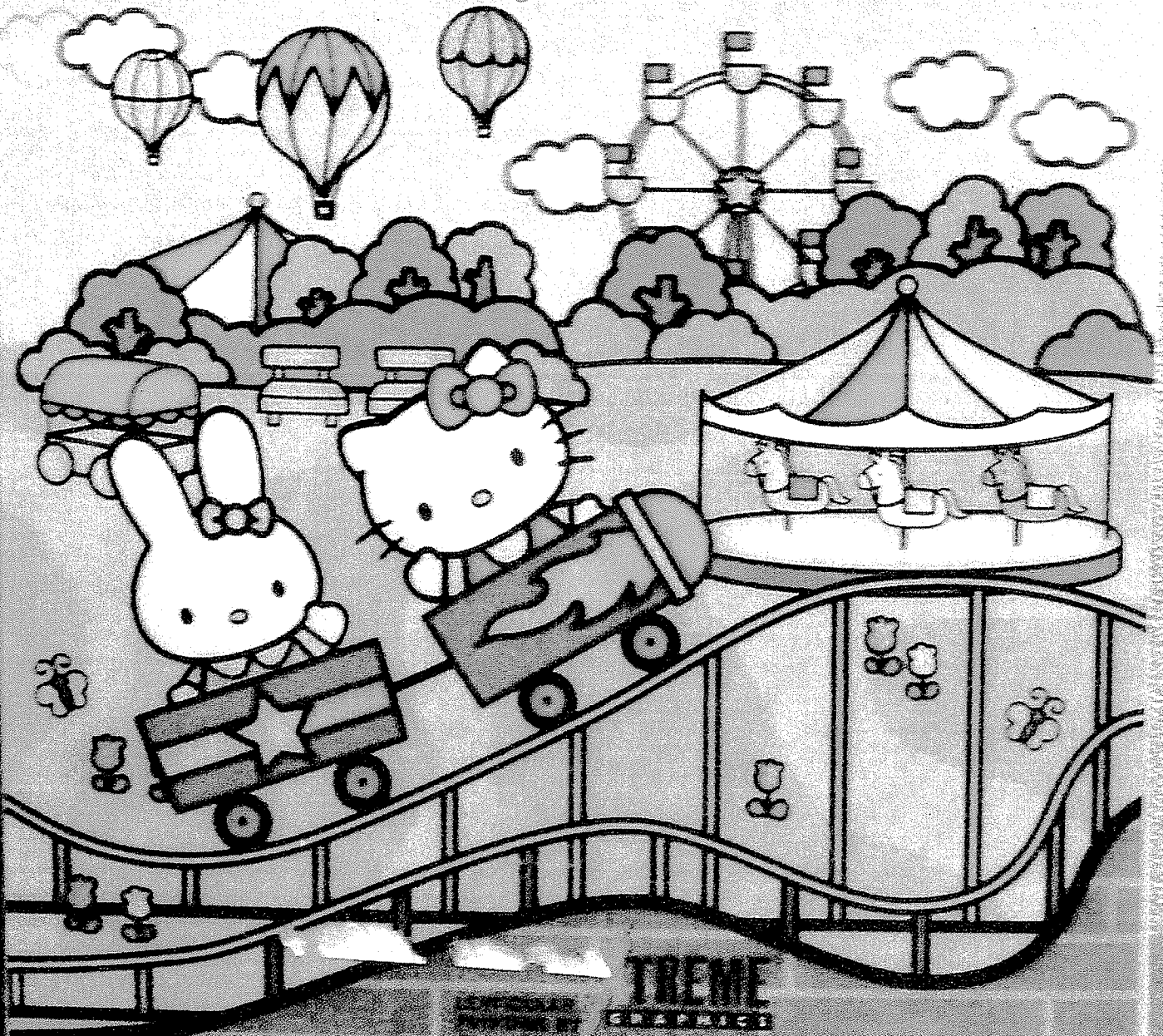
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